

[REDACTED]  
October 23, 1990

My initial response to the editorial in question was nothing more than a mild sense of indifference. As I proceeded further, however, my apathy turned to disappointment and confusion.

Conspicuously absent from the piece upon first examination was any sort of title or headline, making it difficult to grasp the focus of the paper. Further missing was a clear thesis statement anywhere within the text. Even upon finishing the editorial, I was not quite sure of the author's intent.

Neither a partition nor a narrative are found in the piece, although an amusing quotation does begin the editorial and could be considered the exordium.

But any interest that is gained in the first sentence is soon lost by the author's lack of focus. Because of the missing thesis, it seems that the author himself is unsure as to which path to follow. Bond measures, computers in classrooms, and parent involvement in school are all discussed topics, but none to any degree of detail. No argument is either asserted or sustained.

The conclusion of the editorial, as can be logically assumed, is obscured by the lack of thorough argumentation. As several different issues are addressed and none pursued, there is no visible conclusion at the end (or beginning) of the paper.

As far as the techniques used by the author to persuade the audience, it appears as if the editorial fails to take a stance altogether. Throughout the paper, the author alludes to various topics, but proceeds to quote some other authority on that particular subject. In the end, the author fails to make his own opinion known; instead, he remains silent and lets others speak for him. The preceding is my biggest complaint of the editorial.

There seem not to be any fallacies of logic present, but certain insertions within the text confused me. The three quotations concerning education seem not to illuminate the subject, but to cloud it. All three are thought-provoking, to be sure, but add little, if any, relevance to the editorial. These quotes contribute to the cluttered nature of the paper.

Another aspect of the editorial which should be discussed is the author's use of sources. Seven different individuals were quoted either directly or indirectly in this piece. Perhaps if more factual evidence were used, instead of the opinions of unrelated personnel, the arguments would have been more persuasive, i.e. evidence of how computers in the classroom have succeeded/failed in the past.

In an overall sense, the editorial fails to persuade the reader and lacks a clear message. Grammatically, several errors are present, both in punctuation and A.P. style; however, these are insignificant compared to the larger structural problems which hinder this paper's effectiveness.

What other  
sources could  
author have used?  
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## **CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING EDITORIALS**

- 1. Have the ground rules for writing in course been followed?**

  - a. Are opinions based upon a substratum of fact? *H=+/*
  - b. Is the purpose statement and primary sources properly listed? *D=+/*
  - c. Is copy presented ready for publication?  
(two copies/headline written) *H=+/*
  - d. Is subject matter appropriate for local audience? *H=+/*
  - e. Have A.P. rules been applied? *H=+/*
  - f. Has editorial been carefully revised and edited? *H=+/*
  - g. Is editorial within 250-750 word limit? *H=+/*
  - h. Was editorial submitted at time specified? *H=+/*

**2. Content and structural characteristics of the editorial.**

  - a. Is the subject of editorial clearly stated? *H=+/*
  - b. Is the opening paragraph effective?  
(thesis/exordium/narrative/partition) *D=+/*
  - c. Is "proof structure" used effectively? *H=+/*
  - d. Is a meaningful focus, emphasis, and/or frame of reference maintained? *D=+/*
  - e. Is the order of presentation effective? *H=+/*
  - f. Is a two-sided argument used effectively? *H=+/*
  - g. Does the conclusion follow from the arguments? *H=+/*
  - h. Is the conclusion explicitly stated? *H=+/*

**3. Are the traditional techniques of persuasion used effectively?**

  - a. Are the common fallacies of logic avoided?  
(oversimplification/equivocation/circular argument/begging the question/complex question/ad populum) *H=+/*
  - b. Is the appeal employed used effectively?  
(to reason/to the emotions/other appeal) *H=+/*
  - c. Are the arguments presented clear and persuasive?  
(nature of a thing/cause and effect/personal testimony/literary reference) *D=+/*
  - d. Is repetition with variation used effectively?  
(parallelism/enumeration/questions/labels) *H=+/*
  - e. Is the tone and/or approach appropriate? *H=+/*
  - f. Are literary devices employed effectively? *H=+/*

**4. Finally, how effective is the editorial as persuasion?**

  - a. Does it illuminate the subject or issue? *H=+/*
  - b. Does the editorial take a stance, offer a reasonable solution, etc.? *H=+/*
  - c. Does it indicate the reasons for the views expressed? *H=+/*
  - d. Is it likely to reinforce or change attitudes? *H=+/*
  - e. Does it have something worthwhile to say? *H=+/*